**Turn Narrative Writing into Expository Pieces**

The following lesson is adapted from Gretchen Bernabei’s *The Story of My Thinking.*

**Goal:** Explore possibilities for turning narrative pieces into expository and/or argumentative writing. (When an essay comes from a topic selected by a student, the writing is more likely to be interesting and lively.)

**Purpose:** Create helpful lists that can serve as references for essay writing

**Non-purpose:** Write a finished essay

**Standard (W.CCR.2)** – Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

**Standard (W.CCR.10)** – Write routinely…for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Take a quick poll to determine what kind of writing students prefer. *Most of us write narratives when we have the opportunity to choose. Since we are required to do an increasing amount of expository and argument writing, we’ll examine how to use narratives to find ideas for expository and argument writing.*

* Provide the following worksheet and read aloud a short narrative you’ve chosen.
* Ask them to identify topics found in the narrative.
* What would people find interesting or be curious about in these topics? Write as questions. These are the seeds for expository writing.
* Using the questions that were developed, add at least four titles to the titles page. Students will have to be shown how not to repeat the same word in all titles. Ask them to consider subtopics (circle them) that have surfaced in the questions.
* Again considering the topic/s, finish the sentences “I think…” or “Some people think…” These are the seeds for persuasive writing.

Before students do the column about their own narratives, do Stand Up/ Hand Up/ Pair Up. Each student has 30 seconds to share the story they are currently writing in class.

Do a timed, guided completion of the last column of the worksheet.

Following completion, read to the students an informational or persuasive piece which includes narrative as an example of next steps for students.

If time permits, do a small group share of titles, taking turns sharing one title at a time. Follow with a large group share by calling on students to share favorite titles, their own or one they heard.

**USING NARRATIVE TO FIND EXPOSITORY AND ARGUMENT WRITING**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **GROUP STORY** | **MY STORY** |
| **NARRATIVE:**  Write a one sentence summary. |  |  |
| **TOPIC/S:** |  |  |
| **EXPOSITORY:**  What would people be curious about or interested in? Write as questions. |  |  |
| **ARGUMENT:**  Finish these sentences about your topic  “I think\_\_\_\_.”  “Some people think \_\_\_\_\_.” |  |  |

**Titles That Sell Informational Articles**

All About \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and Why It Matters

Everything You Need to Know About \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

What You Never Knew About \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Top Ten Reasons for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

The Secret(s) Behind \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

The Truth About \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Amazing Facts About \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

The Real Story About \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Controversy

Your Personal Guide to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Win Big with \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Prizewinning \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

The Ultimate Scoop on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Hidden Secrets About \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

An Essential Guide to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for Dummies

Lessons from a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Just Say No to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Little Known Facts About \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

The Secret Life of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**This Robber Took More Than Money**

by Colleen Appel

I stood first on one foot, then the other. I glanced nervously at my watch. My mind raced with all the things I had yet to do before I entered the hospital for major surgery the next day. Purchase new pajamas, gather reading materials, stock the house with food, pack my suitcase… I resented the time spent waiting for the notary at the bank to sign some legal papers. I just didn’t have the time to spare. Little did I know that not only was my time going to be robbed, but also my sense of security.

“Give me all of your money.”

I listen incredulously to the young man in a baseball cap and hooded sweatshirt who stood less than six feet to my left. It must be a joke I think, and surely the teller thinks it too, for she asks him to repeat himself.

“Give me all of your money.”

The teller calmly proceeds to hand him money from her cash drawer, and he stuffs the bills into his sweatshirt. I mentally process the fact that I’ve seen no gun; I don’t want to be around if one appears. The bank is very small, and I’m close to the door. I catch myself thinking that I won’t get my check cashed and therefore won’t have money or legal papers for the hospital. I dismiss that as a foolish notion. Staying alive comes first. I leave and head for the safety of my car.

I can now become a hero. I will watch the robber and identify him and his get-away car for the police. However, there is no car, and I watch the young man run northwest toward the interstate highway.

I think I might be of some value as a witness so I offer my services to the police who have arrived very quickly. It turns out I’m a lousy witness; my description of the robber is quite different from that of the teller. I am very nervous and feel like an idiot.

The bank manager is quite sympathetic when I explain what I have come to the bank for. I get my papers signed, I go home to tell my husband a truly incredible story, and flowers from the bank arrive the next day.

To this day I feel a sense of unease when I enter a bank. That bank robber didn’t just take my money--he robbed me of my sense of security too.

*Note: The following article was written to illustrate the use of narrative in an expository piece. This policy was instituted in 2002, shortly after the robbery I witnessed.*

**Banks Hope No Hats, No Hoodies Policy Curbs Robberies**

Bank customer Colleen Appel welcomes the new bank policy that asks people entering their buildings to remove hats, hoodies, and sunglasses. Appel recently stood next to a young man wearing a baseball cap and hooded sweatshirt when he robbed the branch office she frequents.

“He didn’t show a gun, but I didn’t want to wait to see if he had one,” said Appel who escaped to her car during the commission of the robbery. “I welcome anything the bank does to make it harder to commit a robbery.”

Twenty-six banks and credit unions with 141 locations in the Ozarks have joined an initiative that calls for the institutions to post polite signs asking customers to remove hats and sunglasses. FBI Special Agent Dave Burlew suggested that removing items that obscure their faces could make some robbers think twice and could give authorities a full view of their faces for security purposes.

Nationally bank robberies have increased about 19 percent and have jumped 28 percent in Missouri. Losses in bank robberies average at $4,500. There have been 14 robberies so far this year in the Springfield area, about double the annual average.

Appel is too uneasy to reenter the bank where she witnessed the robbery. “He took more than money. He robbed me of my sense of security too.”